

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (previously presented): A split connecting rod comprising:
a crank-pin hole;
a valley provided on an inner circumferential surface of the crank-pin hole; and
a fracture starting point groove provided at the base portion of said valley;
wherein

the fracture starting point groove includes a pair of walls parallel to a predetermined fracture plane, and a bottom surface which connects the pair of parallel walls and forms an arc with a radius of R; and

the valley forms an angle with respect to the predetermined fracture plane greater than an angle that the pair of walls of the fracture starting point groove define with respect to the predetermined fracture plane.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The split connecting rod according to claim 1, wherein a width of said fracture starting point groove is less than a width of said valley.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The split connecting rod according to claim 1, wherein said valley is provided such that said base portion is located at a position where a ratio of a depth of said fracture starting point groove to a shortest distance from an opening of said fracture starting point groove to a bolt hole is about 70% or more.

Claim 4 (previously presented): The split connecting rod according to claim 1, further comprising a bearing locking groove provided on said inner circumferential surface of the crank-pin hole, wherein said valley is provided on the inner circumferential surface of the crank-pin hole at a position opposite to a position where

the bearing locking groove is provided on said inner circumferential surface of the crank-pin hole.

Claim 5 (previously presented): The split connecting rod according to claim 4, wherein said bearing locking groove includes a pair of concave portions located at positions that are deviated in the circumferential direction of said inner circumferential surface of the crank-pin hole.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The split connecting rod according to claim 5, wherein a width of said valley in the circumferential direction of said inner circumferential surface is less than a width of the pair of concave portions of said bearing locking groove in the circumferential direction of said inner circumferential surface.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The split connecting rod according to claim 1, wherein the split connecting rod is a nut-less connecting rod that is made of one of forged material, a cast material and a sintered material.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The split connecting rod according to claim 1, further comprising a small end portion and a large end portion, wherein the large end portion includes the valley and the fracture starting point groove .

Claim 9 (previously presented): The split connecting rod according to claim 1, further comprising a rod portion and a cap portion.

Claim 10 (previously presented): The split connecting rod according to claim 1, wherein the fracture starting point groove includes a pair of the fracture starting point grooves provided on the inner circumferential surface of the crank-pin hole.

Claim 11 (previously presented): The split connecting rod according to claim 10, wherein the angle between the predetermined fracture plane and the valley is approximately 45 degrees.

Claim 12 (previously presented): The split connecting rod according to claim 11, wherein an interior angle of the valley is approximately 90 degrees.

Claim 13 (canceled).

Claim 14 (previously presented): The split connecting rod according to claim 1, wherein a cross section of the valley is larger than a cross section of the fracture starting point groove.

Claim 15 (previously presented): The split connecting rod according to claim 1, wherein the valley includes a pair of sloped portions.

Claims 16-21 (canceled).

Claim 22 (previously presented): The split connecting rod according to claim 1, wherein a depth H from the inner circumferential surface of the crank-pin hole to a bottom portion of the bottom surface and the radius R are set such that a ratio H/R is about 1.0 to about 10.0.

Claim 23 (previously presented): An engine comprising the split connecting rod according to claim 1.

Claim 24 (previously presented): A vehicle comprising the split connecting rod according to claim 1.

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Claims 25-32 (canceled).